7: Thompson--378 J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 872, 874, 177.87 France
636.87

"In 1931 the government reluctantly pulled itself together to remedy an admittedly bad situation. Certain provinces and certain bonzes were selected as fields for experimentation. An itinerant teacher was sent around to the pagoda schools to conduct model classes with a very simple programme, as a practical demonstration before the bonzes. Blackboards, textbooks, and chalk were doled out to these schools, which had heretofore lacked even such elementary equipment. Bonzes were asked to report semi-annually on the number and progress of their pupils. Slowly an examination was organized with a certificate, so as to set up some standard and to stimulate the sluggish Laotian zeal for knowledge. The problem of further training for bonzes is delicate. The idea of a small scale Normal School was again revived in 1932, and attempts were made to avoid some of the pitfalls which had doomed earlier experiments. The majority of bonzes still could not teach either reading or writing. They were less than half-hearted in falling in with the government's ideas, and would break training at the slightest provocation, thus automatically condemning their schools. The new courses are more modern in method, more prudent in application, and more successful in their results than the old, but it is too soon as yet to draw any conclusions about that elusive and infinitesimal effort known as Laotian education. Less than 300 schools teach fewer than 7,000 pupils in French Laos."

25: Brodrick--98-99 S-3 (1939) 1948 Laotians
116, 779, 782, 792, 872

"...the framework of Little Vehicle Buddhism looks much the same as in the land of the Khmers. There are the saffron-robes, but the bonzes are sturdier and less composed than in Cambodia. When the monks do their rounds with their begging-bowls, the holy men do not hesitate to look women in the face, to speak with them and even to touch their hands. The Laotian bonzes are not the less Laotian for being bonzes, and by no means all of them observe strictly the precepts of their Order. In fact, some of them are [99] a little loose of conduct. Again, the Buddhist hierarchy in the Laos is almost more sacerdotal than monastic, and, in the public estimation, the bonze is more or less of a priest, that is, a man performing efficacious and quasi-magical ceremonies. There are temple-schools, as in Cambodia, Siam and Burma. In these schools the male population learns to read and write in the complicated Laotian script that is rather derived from Siamese than from Cambodian. The same moral obligations are supposed to constrain the monks. The offerings at the pagoda services are just fragrant frangipani flowers, candles and incense. There is no such divergence from Little Vehicle practice as would make of Laotian Buddhism a new religion such as is the Lamaism of Tibet. But everything is a little distorted, vague, misty, if we will. The alien religion is subjected to a strong push from beneath and is transmuted by an all-pervading atmosphere of nonchalance and good humour."